

Message Text

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43

ACTION EUR-12

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P R 241230Z MAY 75

FM AMEMBASSY BERLIN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0847

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

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C O N F I D E N T I A L BERLIN 5742

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, GW, WB, US, UR, OVIP (KISSINGER, HENRY A.)

SUBJECT: SOVIET PROTEST OF GENSCHER VISIT TO BERLIN

REF: (A) BONN 8254 (B) BERLIN 5736 (C) BONN 8041 (D) BONN 8308

SUMMARY:

THE GENERAL IMPRESSION AMONG DIPLOMATS HERE, AND OUR OWN VIEW, IS THAT THE INCIDENT OF SOVIET AMBASSADOR ABRASIMOV'S PROTEST AGAINST GENSCHER'S TRAVEL TO BERLIN WITH SECRETARY KISSINGER, WHILE CURIOUS AND DIFFICULT TO PLACE IN PERSPECTIVE, HAS PROBABLY RUN ITS COURSE.
END SUMMARY

1. ON THE MORNING OF MAY 22, THE DAY AFTER SECRETARY KISSINGER'S VISIT TO WEST BERLIN ON WHICH HE WAS ACCOMPANIED BY FRG FONMIN GENSCHER, TWO ARTICLES APPEARED IN NEUES DEUTSCHLAND. THE FIRST DEALT BRIEFLY WITH THE SECRETARY'S VISIT AND THEN, IN A WAY DESIGNED TO SEPARATE
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REPORTING ON THIS VISIT FROM COMMENTARY ON THE FACT THAT

THE SECRETARY WAS ACCOMPANIED BY GENSCHER, IN ANOTHER PARAGRAPH NOTED THAT GENSCHER "TOOK PART OFFICIALLY IN A CEREMONY IN THE WEST BERLIN HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES IN HIS CAPACITY AS FRG FOREIGN MINISTER". NEUES DEUTSCHLAND COMMENTED THAT " ALL OF THESE OFFICIAL ACTIVITIES OF THE FRG FOREIGN MINISTER IN WEST BERLIN ARE A CLEAR VIOLATION OF THE QUADRIPARTITE AGREEMENT CONCERNING WEST BERLIN, WHICH HAD CLEARLY ESTABLISHED THAT WEST BERLIN DOES NOT BELONG TO THE FRG AND IS NOT PERMITTED TO BE GOVERNED BY THE FRG."

2. MORE STRIKING THAN THESE COMMENTS WAS A "PRESS STATEMENT BY THE SOVIET AMBASSADOR IN THE GDR" CARRIED BELOW ON THE SAME PAGE. IN THIS STATEMENT (WHICH WAS NOT IN THE FIRST PERSON SINGULAR) ABRASIMOV NOTED THAT THE SECRETARY WAS ESCORTED ("BEGLEITET") BY GENSCHER IN THE LATTER'S OFFICIAL CAPACITY, AND ASSERTED THAT THIS WAS A "SERIOUS VIOLATION" OF THE QA.

3. AT NOON ON MAY 22, FRG REPRESENTATIVE GAUS GAVE A LARGE RECEPTION IN EAST BERLIN COMMEMORATING THE ANNIVERSARY OF THE FRG BASIC LAW. WE HAVE LEARNED FROM GAUS'S DEPUTY BRAUETIGAM THAT GAUS TOLD AMBASSADOR ABRASIMOV AT THIS RECEPTION THAT THE FRG SPOKESMAN IN BONN WOULD LATER THAT AFTERNOON DESCRIBE AMBASSADOR ABRASIMOV'S STATEMENT AS "UNWARRANTED" AND FIRMLY REJECT IT. (REF A). ABRASIMOV, WHO WAS POINTEDLY FRIENDLY THROUGHOUT HIS SHORT DISCUSSION WITH GAUS, DID NOT REPLY DIRECTLY BUT NOTED WITH A SMILE THAT "IT WILL BE POSSIBLE IN A FEW DAYS TO RETURN TO PRACTICAL BUSINESS." THE WEST GERMANS, WHO HAVE NO "PRACTICAL" BILATERAL BUSINESS WITH ABRASIMOV, ASSUME THAT THIS REFERENCE WAS INTENDED TO APPLY TO CERTAIN MATTERS BETWEEN THE USSR AND FRG SUCH AS PROGRESS IN IMPLEMENTING THE BERLIN CLAUSES IN A SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNOLOGICAL AGREEMENT, AND IN A CULTURAL AGREEMENT. ABRASIMOV TOLD GAUS THERE WOULD BE ANOTHER STATEMENT BY THE SOVIETS BUT HE GAVE NO INDICATION AS TO WHAT CHANNELS (I.E. POLADS IN BERLIN OR CAPITALS) WOULD BE USED. ABRASIMOV MADE THE SAME REMARK TO FRENCH AMBASSADOR DE CHALVRON IN THE LATTER'S CONFIDENTIAL

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COURTESY CALL LATER IN THE DAY (REFB).

4. BRAUETIGAM INFORMED SEIDEL, HEAD OF THE FRG DEPARTMENT IN THE GDR FOREIGN MINISTRY, THAT THE FRG VIEWED "WITH GROWING CONCERN" SUCH POLITICAL ACTIONS AFFECTING BERLIN AS THE RECENT SOVIET NOTE IN THE UN AND ABRASIMOV'S STATEMENT CONCERNING GENSCHER. OVER THE LONG RUN, BRAUETIGAM SAID, SUCH ACTIONS CAN ONLY DAMAGE THE

DEVELOPMENT OF FRG/GDR RELATIONS.

5. AT ANOTHER FUNCTION WE ASKED SOVIET EMBASSY MINISTER-COUNSELOR SACHAROW WHETHER ANY SPECIAL SIGNIFICANCE SHOULD BE ATTACHED TO THE FACT THAT ABRASIMOV CONVEYED HIS VIEWS ON GENSCHER'S PROPOSED TRAVEL THROUGH GAUS TO BONN. SACHAROW, WHO TOOK A RELAXED VIEW OF THE ENTIRE MATTER, SAID THAT ABRASIMOV FOUND THIS A VONVENIENT WAY TO REACH THE FRG. THERE WAS NO SPECIAL SIGNIFICANCE TO THIS CHANNEL (REFS C AND D).

6. AT YET ANOTHER FUNCTION ATTENDED BY DR. GEYER, HEAD OF THE GDR FOREIGN MINISTRY' NORTH AMERICAN DIVISION, DCM REFERRED TO ABRASIMOV'S PRESS STATEMENT AND SAID IT SEEMED DIFFICULT TO UNDERSTAND IN THE CONTEXT OF THE QA, ON WHICH IT WAS BASED. GEYER RESPONDED IN PRIVATE CONVERSATION THAT WHAT BOTHERED THE GDR WAS THE FACT THAT GENSCHER HAD "ESCORTED" SECRETARY KISSINGER, THEREBY GIVING THE FONMIN AN OFFICIAL ROLE IN WEST BERLIN. (COMMENT: "BEGLEITEN" CAN BE TRANSLATED EITHER AS "ESCORTING" OF AS "ACCOMPANYING". WHILE GEYER DID NOT MAKE THIS DISTINCTION, IT IS CLEAR THAT THE FORMER DEFINITION WAS THE ONE HE INTENDED.) GEYER EMPHASIZED THAT IN PREPARING THE NEWS STORIES AND HEADLINES FOR THAT DAY' NEUES DEUTSCHLAND(SIC), HE AND OTHERS HAD MADE A MAJOR POINT OF CLEARLY SEPARATING THE ABRASIMOV PRESS STATEMENT FROM COMMENTS ABOUT THE SECRETARY'S VISIT ITSELF, WHICH THE GDR FOUND CONSTRUCTIVE.

7. COMMENT: MANY OF OUR DIPLOMATIC COLLEAGUES IN EAST BERLIN BELIEVE THAT THE SOVIETS HAVE AN EXTRAODINARILY WEAK CASE IN THEIR PROTEST CONCERNING GENSCHER. THE CONFIDENTIAL

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SWEDISH AMBASSADOR, FOR EXAMPLE, HAS DESCRIBED ABRASIMOV'S PRESS STATEMENT TO US AS A "MISSTEP," AND A CURIOUS ONE AS THE SOVIET AMBASSADOR MUST SURELY HAVE BEEN INSTRUCTED BY MOSCOW IN A MATTER SUCH AS THIS. BRITISH, FRENCH, ITALIAN AND FRG REPRESENTATIVES HAVE SIMILAR VIEWS. THE GENERAL IMPRESSION HERE IS THAT THIS INCIDENT, WHILE CURIOUS AND DIFFICULT TO PLACE IN PERSPECTIVE, HAS PROBABLY RUN IT S COURSE. COOPER

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